

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of delivering advertising to users in a computer network, the method comprising:

5

designating a plurality of items as member items of a group;

making the member items available over the computer network;

downloading at least one member item to a computer; and

delivering advertising to the computer even if no member item is being utilized in the computer.

10

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the act of delivering advertising to the computer so long as any member item remains in the computer.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the member items include a computer program.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the computer network includes the Internet.

15

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the act of making a list of member items in the computer.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the advertising is selected based on a web page viewed by a user of the computer.

7. A computer comprising:

20

an item provided in exchange for the right to deliver advertising to the computer;

computer-readable program code for detecting the item in the computer;
and

computer-readable program code for delivering a piece of advertising to
the computer so long as the item remains in the computer and regardless of
whether the item is being used.

8. The computer of claim 7 wherein the item includes a computer program.

9. The computer of claim 7 wherein the item is provided over the Internet.

10. The computer of claim 7 further comprising a list of member items present
in the computer.

11. The computer of claim 7 wherein the piece of advertising is displayed in a
pop-up.

12. The computer of claim 7 wherein the piece of advertising includes targeted
advertising.

13. The method of claim 7 wherein the piece of advertising is on behalf of a
competitor of a company whose web page is being viewed by a user.

14. A method of providing items to users comprising:

designating any member of a group of items as a member item;

making one or more member items available to a user;

providing at least one member item to the user; and

providing additional items to the user so long as the user retains at least one member item and regardless of whether the user is utilizing any member item.

15 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the group of items includes a computer
5 program as a member item.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein the additional items include a message selected for delivery to a computer of the user based on a web page visited by the user.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the additional items include advertising relevant to a web page being viewed by the user.

10 18. The method of claim 14 wherein the additional items include advertising
provided on behalf of a competitor of a company whose web page is being viewed by
the user.

15 19. The method of claim 14 wherein the additional items include advertising
provided on behalf of a company whose product is of the same type as a competitor's
product advertised over the Internet.

20. The method of claim 14 wherein the additional items include a computer program.

21. The method of claim 14 wherein member items of the group of items are available over the Internet.

20 22. The method of claim 14 wherein the group of items includes an advertising
group.